

What is claimed is:

1 A method for embedding information in an image so that the image will have
2 different information when the image is reproduced by a scanning or printing process,
3 the method comprising the steps of:

4 embedding digital information in an image;

5 printing the embedded digital information and the image to produce a original
6 printed image;

7 scanning the original printed image to obtain a digital image of the embedded
8 information and the image;

9 determining the signal strength of the original image; and

10 comparing the signal strength of a printed image with the signal strength of the
11 original printed image to determine whether or not the printed image is a copy of
12 the original printed image.

1 2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the image is a postal indicia.

1 3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the image is a graphic.

1 4. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein a bit map file is created for the original
2 printed image.

1 5. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the comparing step further including the
2 step of:

3 measuring the signal strength of the original printed image to set a threshold
4 value for the original printed image and copies of the original printed image.

1 6. The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of a printed image
2 is greater than the threshold value the printed image is the original printed image.

1 7. The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of a printed image
2 is less than the threshold value the printed image is not the original printed image.